

Since *Roe v. Wade* legalized abortion through all 9 months of pregnancy, more than 63 million children have been killed in this country by abortion—63 million. It is an unfathomable number and, frankly, a heartbreaking number. To put it into some kind of perspective, that is more than twice the population of the State of Texas and more than 70 times the population of my home State of South Dakota. Sixty-three million. Sixty-three million unique, unrepeatable human beings—future doctors and nurses and farmers and teachers and busdrivers and plumbers and scientists. That is a lot of innocent lives lost.

And, yes, when we talk about unborn babies, we are talking about human lives. Members of the pro-abortion left would like to obscure this fact, but science and medical technology and plain old common sense, I would add, all clearly demonstrate the humanity of the unborn child. Every mom who has ever felt her unborn baby kick is well aware that she isn't just carrying around a clump of cells, and ultrasound technology and medical advancements have made the humanity of the unborn child even more undeniable. It is impossible to hear the heartbeat of an unborn child at 6 weeks and say that he or she is not alive. It is impossible to look at an unborn baby on an ultrasound kicking her feet and moving her hands and sucking her thumb and to pretend that she is anything but a human being. And human beings deserve to be protected.

Democrats' response to the Dobbs decision has been predictably hysterical. We have heard cries to pack the Supreme Court because apparently the only legitimate Supreme Court is a Supreme Court that rules in line with Democrats' policy preferences. We have heard cries to abolish the filibuster and to eliminate protections for the minority party in the Senate and the Americans whom it represents. We have heard a proposal to establish abortion facilities in national parks.

I am struggling to think of any family who wants an abortion facility to be part of the itinerary offered on their trip to Yellowstone or the Badlands of South Dakota; but, apparently, some Democrats think our national parks should become abortion factories.

Then, of course, there is the flood of misinformation out there falsely suggesting that pro-life laws would prevent women from getting essential medical care for miscarriages and ectopic pregnancies. And on top of all this, multiple Democrats have started a crusade against pregnancy resource centers. That is right. Pregnancy resource centers—which were established to provide moms in need with things like diapers and baby clothes, prenatal and parenting classes, help connecting with State and local resources, emotional support, and agency referrals for moms who want to choose adoption—are now under attack by members of the Democratic Party.

Apparently, the pro-choice party can't stand the idea that women might be offered a choice other than abortion.

When the Dobbs decision was handed down, the President called it a sad day for our country—a sad day. To the President and his party, apparently it is a sad day when the doors open to greater protection for human life and human rights. I would say that it is a sad day when the right to kill unborn human beings has become the signature issue of the Democratic Party, when the party that portrays itself as the defender of the little guy has become the party that wants to deny even the smallest protection to the littlest guys and girls among us.

The Democrats' vision of America is not my vision of America. I believe that America is big enough to take care of both moms and their babies. We don't have to pit moms and babies against each other. We can take care of them both. It is something the pro-life movement has been focused on for years and something that a number of States have worked to do with their Alternatives to Abortion programs. And I know that commitment will only grow in the wake of the Dobbs decision.

Those who seek to deny human rights to some human beings are never found to be on the right side of history, as our Nation knows, to its sorrow. Our country was founded to protect human rights—the right to life, to liberty, and to the pursuit of happiness; but for almost 50 years now, our country has failed to protect the human rights of unborn human beings.

Today, thanks to the Dobbs decision, we have a chance to change that. We have a chance to build a society where the life of every American is valued and where being small and vulnerable does not mean that your human rights are any less respected. At our best, we are a country that defends human rights, not denies them. We stand up for the innocent. We protect them. We fight for them. It is time to live up to that.

The Dobbs decision gives us a chance to protect the human rights of the smallest and most innocent humans among us, but the Dobbs decision would never have happened without the tireless work of so many since the day *Roe v. Wade* was decided. It would never have happened without those who prayed, who offered help to moms in need, who fought for the rights of unborn Americans in elections, in courts, and in State legislatures.

"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves," it says in the book of Proverbs, and for 50 years that is what members of the pro-life movement have done. And it is their work that has brought us to this day when we finally, once again, have a chance to protect innocent unborn Americans in law. May the Lord reward their work and their wages be full from the Lord.

I know that sometimes it seemed like the day when *Roe v. Wade* would be

overturned would never come, but it is here. And while there is still much work to be done to ensure that the human rights of unborn Americans are respected and that moms and their babies have the support they need, it is, nevertheless, a moment for joy and for gratitude. I am profoundly grateful for this decision, profoundly grateful that we now have the opportunity to move closer to the day when we fully live up to our founding principles and ensure that every American—born or unborn—has the opportunity for life, for liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas.

#### INFLATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, month after month, week after week, day after day, family budgets are being battered by inflation—inflation made worse by the reckless spending habits of the Federal Government and particularly of the Biden administration.

Gas prices are up nearly 50 percent from a year ago, and grocery bills—as any of us can see when we go to the grocery store—have soared. From eggs to milk to meat to produce, everyday essentials cost more today than they did last year.

The pain of inflation is having a dramatic impact on the American people. This quote from the *New York Times* yesterday sums it up pretty well:

Widespread concerns about the economy and inflation have helped turn the national mood decidedly dark, both on Mr. Biden and the trajectory of our nation.

It is a sentiment I have heard over and over again in my conversations with my constituents in Texas, and it is one that is increasingly visible in public surveys. A recent poll from the *New York Times* and Siena College found that more than three-quarters of voters think that the United States is headed in the wrong direction—three-quarters of the country. Only 13 percent said the country was on the right track.

With voter confidence at a concerning low, our Democratic colleagues have made an interesting calculation. They are trying to resurrect their "Build Back Broke" agenda. Now, you may remember this bill, which was called Build Back Better, but I think it can more accurately be described as "Build Back Broke" or "Build Back Bankrupt." This bill went out with a whimper last year because our Democratic colleagues didn't even have the support among their Members to pass it in an evenly divided Senate where the Vice President breaks the tie.

So they have now chosen this moment, for some reason, to bring it back. To have a shot at passing this proposal, our Democratic colleagues have slimmed and trimmed the bill, but it still packs a painful punch, especially where it has to do with energy prices.

Last month, the national average of gasoline exceeded \$5 a gallon for the

first time on record—5 bucks a gallon, plus. Since then, prices have fallen some, but the national average today is still \$4.66 a gallon. Now, that is better than \$5, but it is certainly no reason for celebration, and it still costs almost 40 bucks more to fill up a pickup truck today than it did a year ago.

In standard fashion, the Biden administration has tried to blame someone else. Mr. Biden has implausibly blamed Vladimir Putin for the high price of gasoline. So rather than acknowledge the impact of its own policies which have discouraged investment in new production, new supply, the administration is trying to blame the very energy companies that we are depending on to produce more oil and gas so we can make more gasoline and so we can bring the price down.

I have heard from oil and gas producers in Texas who are working to ramp up production and bring down prices for consumers. It is as if the law of supply and demand has somehow been repealed during this administration. They simply don't get it that if you want to bring down the price of something, you need to increase supply or reduce demand. This administration doesn't understand that it is not as simple as just pushing a button on a machine to increase output. This is a process that takes time. It takes investment. It takes time to build the pipelines and the infrastructure. It takes time to drill the wells and produce the oil and send it to the refineries to make into gasoline and jet fuel.

While industry is working to increase supply, Washington Democrats are looking for new ways to put an even tighter squeeze on domestic energy. You would have thought that the Russian invasion of Ukraine demonstrated the irresponsibility of not maintaining multiple accesses to energy. As a matter of fact, Mr. Putin had convinced most of Europe to depend solely on Russian supply, and then when that is no longer available or when he uses it as a weapon, they are looking around for alternatives. But they are not easy to come by. They take time, and they take some investment.

According to reports, we are hearing that our Democratic colleagues are considering a new tax that would require energy producers to pay hefty fees if they emit more methane than our Democratic colleagues would allow.

Natural gas accounts for about 40 percent of our electricity, double the amount of renewable resources. You know, we are having a hot spell in Texas. I know it is July. It is always hot in Texas in July, but we are having a particularly bad spell of 100-degree-plus days in my hometown of Austin, TX, and across the State. And one of the problems is that, for some reason, the wind that we depend on to produce electricity from wind turbines has died down during this hot period, so not only do you have the constraints on

natural gas and other sources of energy, but now even renewable sources like wind are not producing as much electricity as we need in order to maintain the grid, in order to maintain things like air-conditioning.

Hitting producers of natural gas with a methane fee and other proposed tax hikes isn't going to change the fact that we need natural gas to keep the lights on. We have seen emissions reduced by about 15 percent over recent years, primarily because the country has transitioned from coal to natural gas. You would think that would be something that we would celebrate, and certainly our energy supply continues to transition as we come up with new and different ways to satisfy our demand and our economy's need for affordable energy.

One change this tax that our Democratic colleagues are considering would have is on energy costs for American people. Electricity costs are already up 12 percent from last year, and with this new methane fee, they would certainly rise even more. So instead of policies that would reduce the pain at the pump and at the grocery store of sky-high prices, actually, our Democratic colleagues are considering policies that would make it worse.

I understand this proposal is still in the drafting phase, but it is an example of the sort of things that our colleagues are considering in their "Build Back Broke" reconciliation bill. Last go-around, the "Build Back Broke" included tax credits for rich people buying expensive electric vehicles. Now, most of my constituents in Texas can't afford an \$80,000 electric vehicle, but if you are a well-to-do person and you can pay that price, you will get a tax credit, courtesy of Uncle Sam and the Federal Government and our Democratic colleagues. But you won't get it if you are buying a used car on a parking lot because you need to take your kids to school or you need to be able to drive to work.

Our colleagues also propose to provide billions of dollars in taxpayer-funded rebates and grants to cover the cost of retrofitting private homes—not public buildings but private homes.

While the climate policies would be sure to hurt working families, another piece of this proposal would give the richest Americans another cause to celebrate. The so-called millionaire tax break has been scrapped and revived many times over the past few years. It is extremely unpopular among working families for a very simple reason: It allows millionaires and billionaires in blue States to pay less Federal taxes. It is a tax cut for millionaires and billionaires. That is the proposal.

When our colleagues tried to include this provision in their most recent partisan spending attempt, the price for this tax cut for millionaires and billionaires was \$285 billion. That is quite a tax cut for the wealthiest people in America.

According to the liberal Tax Policy Center, 93 percent of those making a

million dollars or more would receive a tax break averaging about \$48,000—a \$48,000 tax cut for people making a million dollars or more or at least 93 percent of them.

So this isn't an attempt to support those who are struggling to make ends meet or to bring down high prices that are wiping out family budgets; it is a get-out-of-jail-free card for the wealthiest people in America who don't want to pay their fair share of taxes.

Under this proposal, two-thirds of those making more than a million dollars would receive a tax cut next year. Nearly 90 percent of those earning between \$500,000 and a million dollars would receive a tax cut. These aren't the families who have been forced to buy just a few bucks' worth of gasoline because they can't afford to fill up their car or remove items from their shopping list because they simply find them to be too expensive or have to make conscious choices for cheaper items at the grocery store in order to feed their family to deal with inflation. We are talking about not making their life better but making life maybe a little bit better for the wealthiest of Americans.

If this proposal were enacted, about 70 percent of the benefit would go to the top 5 percent of earners; that is, people making \$366,000 a year—roughly six times the median income in Texas.

The millionaires who stand to gain the most from this change are those who live in blue States like New York or California that have higher State and local taxes. They would get to deduct up to \$80,000 of their State and local taxes and send the bill to the American taxpayer.

Working families in Texas should not be forced to subsidize the tax bill for Manhattan millionaires. Inflation is already pummeling folks in Texas. The last thing we need to do is to send more tax breaks to the wealthiest of Americans, who are not hurting at this time when the vast majority of Americans are hurting.

Well, I guess it shouldn't be a surprise when the majority leader of the Senate is from New York and the Speaker of the House is from California, two of the highest taxing States at the State and local level. And I understand they are hearing from their constituents saying: We want our old tax break back that we lost in 2017. But you shouldn't prioritize tax breaks for the wealthiest of your constituents over dealing with the rising costs of working families.

This proposal won't ease the burden that Americans are facing or help our country build back better; it will ensure that we never reach the prepandemic economy that was the envy of the world. No PR blitz or no spin doctoring can hide the truth about this reckless tax-and-spending spree proposal that apparently the majority leader is considering. It wraps ill-conceived tax plans, irresponsible spending, and hurtful energy policies into another partisan exercise.

And let's get this straight. No Republican is going to vote for this. So if, in fact, our Democratic colleagues can pass it—and they can if all 50 Senators on the Democratic side and the Vice President vote for it—it will be they who own it and who will be accountable to the American people in the upcoming midterm elections. But it is fair to ask where have these policies gotten us so far.

While the administration has kept its foot on the neck of domestic energy policy while the President is making, apparently, a trip to Saudi Arabia to talk to Muhammad bin Salman about increasing Saudi production of oil—not here in America, which would create jobs, which would create more supply, arguably bring down price at the pump—he is going hat in hand to a foreign leader in a nondemocratic country and saying: Will you please open the spigot just a little bit more?

I think it is embarrassing.

We have also seen our Democratic colleagues spend nearly \$2 trillion on a party-line vote earlier this year that helped ignite inflation to its current 40-year high levels. This new tax-and-spending spree—or, I should say, the old tax-and-spending spree bill which is now being repackaged and presumably resold—won't be any different from the earlier one.

So it isn't time to hand out tax breaks to the well-off or push our country toward unrealistic energy goals at a time of more demand and not enough supply. We need more domestic energy supplies. That would provide relief for working families and a shot at waking up from the economic nightmare that we find ourselves in.

So this reconciliation bill—this “Build Back Broke” bill that is apparently being contemplated by our Democratic colleagues—is not the solution. It is making the problem worse.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PADILLA). The Senator from New Hampshire.

#### NATO SUMMIT

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am really pleased to be able to come to the floor this morning to join my colleagues Senator TILLIS, from North Carolina; Senator ERNST, from Iowa; Senator BLUNT, from Missouri—and we are hoping to be joined by Senator COONS, from Delaware—to talk about the very successful congressional delegation we took in the first week of the 2-week break to Finland, Sweden, and the NATO summit in Madrid.

I want to especially acknowledge my coleader for that delegation, Senator TILLIS. He and I cochaired the Senate NATO Observer Group. And we have both been fervent supporters of NATO and efforts to ensure that the United States continues to be a leader on the world stage and a champion for freedom.

We were also joined on that trip by Senator DURBIN, from Illinois, and Senator FISCHER, from Nebraska.

A couple of months ago, Majority Leader SCHUMER and Minority Leader

McCONNELL asked Senator TILLIS and I to lead that bipartisan delegation to the NATO summit in Madrid to convey the Senate's strong bipartisan support for the alliance, especially amid Putin's unprovoked war in Ukraine.

I was very honored to represent the Senate amid what has been one of the most consequential moments in the history of the transatlantic alliance. And I think probably Senator TILLIS and everyone who was part of that delegation felt the same way.

Our visit to Sweden, Finland, and Spain affirmed three important points: first, the NATO alliance is stronger than ever before—and this year's historic summit reaffirmed that; second, the Strategic Concept that was approved at this year's summit will ensure that NATO is prepared to address immediate threats on all fronts, from Putin's attempts to threaten the sovereignty of our allies to China's challenges to our alliance.

And, finally, as Putin attempts to rewrite history, working with our allies and partners is critical to ensuring that Putin or any leader that attempts to follow in his path is met with the might of NATO's democratic resolve.

One of the other things that I was very impressed with as we met not just with some of our NATO allies but with NATO aspirant country delegations and talked to leaders from the Indo-Pacific who were in Madrid is how everybody we talked to reaffirmed the importance of America's leadership in the world. So I think as we think about the future of NATO, about what we need to do in the United States, it is important to remember just how important our role is.

Now, our trip coincided with Turkey's announcement to support Finland and Sweden's ambitions to join NATO, which will significantly strengthen the alliance. In fact, as we landed in Madrid, we got the news that Turkey had dropped its hold on those applications. So we were able to celebrate.

Sweden and Finland's accession into NATO sends an unmistakable message to Putin: The alliance is stronger than ever and Russia does not have veto power over who joins NATO.

Our delegation was pleased to meet with the leadership from both Sweden and Finland to reaffirm the bipartisan support in the Senate for the swift approval of their NATO applications.

Our delegation's bipartisan message of support for Ukraine and NATO was reciprocated by our allies, which was evident during the meetings that we had with Japan and Germany. We met with Ukrainian officials and underscored our strong support to not only help Ukraine defend itself but to help Ukraine win. And that is what we heard from all of the allies we met with.

It is critical that, as Members of the Senate, we continue to do all we can to coordinate with our allies and support Ukraine's heroic efforts to defend itself

against Putin's aggression because that war is not just against the people of Ukraine; it is an attack on democracies around the world, an attack on our shared transatlantic values—values that have maintained peace for over 70 years.

Our bipartisan delegation made clear that the United States will continue to support peace and stability in Europe and around the world. We will defend every inch of NATO territory and continue to look for ways to bolster Ukraine's defense.

We were pleased to share this commitment with members of the Biden administration who also traveled to the NATO summit. Our delegation met with President Biden, with Secretary Austin, and Secretary Blinken and reaffirmed that the Senate will continue to look for ways to help defend Ukraine and respond to emerging threats from the Balkans to the Indo-Pacific.

Again, I want to thank all of those who went on this very important trip, especially the staff who did such a great job putting it together. I was proud to colead that delegation, which was centered on our bipartisan resolve to support a strong and unified NATO and stand by our Ukrainian partners.

As Putin's war threatens democracies around the world, I think it is important that we send a clear message to our constituents at home and our allies abroad that the United States remains resolute in our commitment to the stability and freedom of all democratic nations because if Putin succeeds in Ukraine, there is no telling where his belligerence will end.

Last night, Senator DURBIN secured unanimous consent for the protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty on the accession of Sweden and Finland to be referred to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. This is an important development as we look at ratifying those protocols. I hope we can get this done as quickly as possible. I hope the Foreign Relations Committee will move on that process and we can act here in the Senate Chamber because swift ratification is in our national security interest.

Again, I am pleased to join my colleagues here on the floor and would like to turn it over to Senator TILLIS to get his impressions from the trip.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I want to thank Senator SHAHEEN and my colleagues on the floor here—Senators COONS, ERNST, BLUNT, and the others who joined the bipartisan delegation at the NATO summit. It was an extraordinary opportunity to see firsthand how the democratic world looks at the United States for leadership.

It was an extraordinary opportunity to talk about Russia's aspirations. It was an extraordinary opportunity to talk about what I think may go down as the greatest miscalculation in this century on the part of Vladimir Putin.

Months ago, when he was massing troops at the Ukrainian border, he